

Sustainable Participatory Community Waste Management

The 10th National Health Assembly,
Having considered the report on "Sustainable Participatory Community Waste Management"¹,

Noting that solid waste is likely to increase every year, affecting the health of the people and the quality of the environment, as it becomes a breeding ground for bacteria and germs, causing various kinds of pollution, with widespread repercussions and that it costs billions of baht in terms of budget to manage the situation with little or no concrete solutions in sight,

Aware that waste can be controlled and managed through individual and community participation, with the support of public and private agencies as well as education institutes and that at present there are a number of capable model agencies and organizations in waste management in many parts of the country, but there is still little or no support, promotion and public awareness in this matter, and that there is a need to integrate the work with partner organizations, networks, public and private agencies at the community, household and local levels in a more extensive and concrete manner,

Concerned that although all the laws, rules and regulations on waste management on the part of government agencies are in force, there is a serious lack of law enforcement and lack of systematic integration of management, and that they do not cover the participation of people directly involved in the management of the issue,

Concerned that most people do not have adequate understanding, discipline and awareness about waste management and that they do not participate in waste management in a concrete manner on a continuous basis and that such a situation cannot lead to sustainable participatory community waste management,

Concerned that laws recently issued, such as Act on the Maintenance of the Cleanliness, and the proposed government policy on centralized waste management may affect the conceptual framework and measures to reduce and segregate community waste in a participatory and sustainable manner and may have an adverse effect on the environment and community health,

Seeing that at present there are communities, local government organizations, public and private agencies serving as models of waste management involving the participation of the people and partner networks and that they can help reduce waste problems in a concrete manner,

Has, therefore, passed the following resolutions:

1. Requesting provincial authorities and Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to set up waste management committees at provincial level where there are local

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government organizations and provincial public bodies, in cooperation with district committee for the development of the quality of life, regional committee for the development of the quality of life, committee on participatory health region for the public, provincial health assembly network and community organization council, to support the community in putting in place mechanisms for the following tasks:

1.1 Set up a committee to prepare sustainable participatory community waste management plans, together with clear indicators to monitor and evaluate the work and incorporate the issue of waste management into the local health charter;

1.2 Campaign for every sector to become more aware of the importance of waste problems in the community and other public spaces on a regular basis and for everyone to consider waste management as their duty to be carried out;

1.3 Create measures, activities or rules that will lead to action involving participation in the development of community projects/plans/activities to reduce, segregate, re-use and recycle community waste, e.g. by setting a waste management fund, waste-processing facilities, a waste buying center, and a community waste bank;

1.4 Request agencies concerned to campaign on education, understanding, discipline building and awareness on environmental impacts, quality of life and ecosystem at individual, family and community levels, including education institutes, work places, religious places, public and private agencies, so that they become more aware of the importance of taking responsibility for waste management by themselves and in public spaces on a regular basis in such a way that it becomes a daily habit;

1.5 Put in place incentive measures to encourage work places/agencies/organizations – sources/points of origin of left-over material that eventually becomes waste – to be collectively responsible for using containers that can be re-used, to take back worn-out products that have lost their quality, to set up a collection point for hazardous and infectious wastes, and to promote organizational values on use of environmentally friendly commodity products and waste reduction, e.g. reducing the use of plastic bags or stopping the use of foam containers.

2. Requesting local government organizations, together with other agencies concerned, to issue by-laws on sustainable participatory management of community waste of every type, to have in place measures for control, supervision and law enforcement, including tax measures, and to report the result to the community in a serious manner.

3. Requesting to have in place a national waste management committee and requesting the Ministry of Interior to act as lead agency together with every ministry, Prime Minister's Office, and local government organizations to do the following action:

3.1 Promote, support, and motivate sustainable community participation, including giving commendations, e.g. giving awards to individuals, model communities and agencies that have a role in good waste management;

3.2 Promote general/local curriculum development, educational integration, training of community leaders and the general public, research and development (innovation), learning resource centers in sustainable participatory waste management involving the community, work places, shops, agencies, organizations, public offices, education institutes and religious places, and preparation of waste management manuals, to ensure that work will continue effectively;

3.3 Promote publicity of information on waste management, legal measures, campaigns to disseminate information on activities in Thai and other languages to the community and visitors on a regular basis, using every kind of media available;

3.4 Promote and provide support with regard to budget, personnel, tools and equipment, and places relating to waste management from upstream all the way to downstream, including putting in place a process to revise regulations and legal provisions accordingly;

3.5 Wherever there is an attempt to centralize waste management or waste disposal in the community, the community shall participate in the studies on possible impacts before and during such attempt, and the findings shall be made available for the public.

4. Requesting the Secretary-General, National Health Commission, to report the progress to the 12th National Health Assembly.